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SUBJECT: PRESS COMMENT ON INDO-U.S. RELATIONS

REF: NEW DELHI 12252

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE SUBRAMANIAM AND CHAVAN STATEMENT ON INDO-U.S. RELATIONS GENERATED LIMITED BUT OPTIMISTIC COMMENT IN THREE DELHI ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS TODAY. EDITORS EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT "IMPROVED RELATIONS" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WILL ENSURE LARGER ECONOMIC AND FOOD AID TO INDIA. COMMENTING ON THE WASHINGTON POST STORY ON DIEGO GARCIA, TWO EDITORIALS CRITICIZED WASHINGTON'S INDIAN OCEAN POLICY. END SUMMARY.

1. IN A LEAD EDITORIAL, "SUCCESSFUL MISSION," THE INDIAN EXPRESS JUDGED THAT FINANCE MINISTER SUBRAMANIAM, "ABLY ASSISTED" BY FOREIGN MINISTER CHAVAN, "HAS ACHIEVED

A REMARKABLE SUCCESS," IN HIS MISSION TO WASHINGTON, AND ADDED "RARELY BEFORE HAS INDIA'S AID DIPLOMACY SCORED SO WELL." THE HINDUSTAN TIMES WELCOMED THE "IMPROVED CLIMATE"

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OF INDO-U.S. RELATIONS. THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS EDITORIALIZED

IT AS "A WELCOME SIGN." COMMENTING ON INDIA'S "OUTLOOK FOR AID" FROM THE FUND-BANK MEETINGS, THE CONGRESS PARTY-ORIENTED NATIONAL HERALD MADE A PASSING REFERENCE TO INDO-U.S. RELATIONS. WELCOMING THE "REPORTED" CHANGE IN U.S. "ATTITUDE," PREDICTED THAT "THIS IS GOING TO BE A LONG AND PAINFUL PROCESS."

2. COMMENT STRESSED THAT IMPROVED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WILL RESULT IN INCREASED DEVELOPMENT AID AS WELL AS FOOD AID TO INDIA. ACCORDING TO THE INDIAN EXPRESS, "THE IMPULSE TOWARD IMPROVEMENT HAS EVIDENTLY STEMMED FROM THE ANXIETY IN INDIA FOR GREATER ELBOW ROOM FOR THE EFFORT INVOLVED IN ECONOMIC REVIVAL AND THE RESUMPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AFTER A PROLONGED PERIOD OF STAGNATION." IT ALSO MAINTAINED THAT THE "NEW FLEXIBILITY" OF GOI'S INDUSTRIAL POLICY "OPENS UP A VAST SCOPE FOR FOREIGN PRIVATE INVESTMENT." THE HINDUSTAN TIMES NOTED THAT "THE IMPROVED RELATIONS" SHOULD BE HELPFUL "NOT ONLY IN ENSURING A LARGER INFLOW OF DEVELOPMENTAL FINANCE BUT ALSO IN MAKING POSSIBLY INCREASED EXPORTS FROM INDIA TO THE U.S." WHAT IS "IMMEDIATELY IMPORTANT," THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS SAID, IS "THE POSITIVE AMERICAN OFFER TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE SETTING UP OF VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL FUNDS..."

3. SPARSE COMMENT ON DIEGO GARCIA WAS LIGHTLY CRITICAL OF THE U.S. INDIAN OCEAN POLICY. IN A THIRD EDITORIAL, THE TIMES OF INDIA BLAMED THE U.S. FOR ITS "CRASS" AND "BASE" BEHAVIOR, "DELIBERATELY MISLEADING" THE CONGRESS, AND "CUNNINGLY DUMPING" THE ISLANDERS. IT SARCASTICALLY CONCLUDED: "WHAT A TELLING CONTRAST THIS IS TO THE FUSS THE U.S. MADE ABOUT THE SO-CALLED REFUGEES FROM SOUTH VIETNAM AROUND THE TIME SAIGON BECAME A HO CHI MINH CITY:" THE PRO-MOSCOW PATRIOT LEAD EDITORIAL, " PENTAGON LIE," DECLARED THAT "DIEGO GARCIA HAS BECOME A SYMBOL OF ANGLO-AMERICAN HYPOCRISY." SUPPORTING SENATOR KENNEDY'S DEMAND FOR REOPENING THE "ENTIRE ISSUE" OF THE U.S. BASE, IT URGED HIM "TO INDUCE AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION TO PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IF THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION...IS TO BE COMPELLED TO REVIEW THE QUESTION OF DIEGO GARCIA."SAXBE

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